

Clearing Forests in Sunderbans for Atomic Power Plant

1417. SHRI PREM CHAND GUPTA: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government plan to locate an Atomic Power Plant in the Sunderbans in South Paraganas;

(b) whether the Sunderbans has the largest mangrove forests in the world and is also a wildlife reserve, with the highest tiger population;

(c) whether the Supreme Court judgement on a writ petition says that 'no felling of trees would be permitted in any forest, public or private; and

(d) if so, how Government plan to clear forest areas in the Sunderbans for Atomic Power Plant site and why Government are adopting a hush-hush policy on this project?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI BABULAL MARANDI): (a) No site has been finally selected for setting up of a nuclear power plant in the Sunderbans of South 24 Parganas.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) Hon'ble Supreme Court has directed that dead-dry fallen trees and even grasses should not be removed from the areas notified under Section 18 and 39 of the Wild Life (Protection) Act.

(d) No proposal has been received for consideration of the project in the Ministry of Environment & Forests.

Conserving Wild Life

1418. SHRI RAJU PARMAR:

SHRI C.M. IBRAHIM:

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) the number and details of seizures of skins, bones and other parts of wild animals, including tigers and other wild cats, during 1997-98, 1998-99, 1999-2000 and the current year so far by various security outfits or forest department personnel;

(b) whether any gangs of poachers, smugglers and traders working

in collusion with forest officials and others, have been busted; if so, the details in this regard; and

(c) the action taken against them and otherwise to prevent depletion of wild life population, indicating the species that have so far gone extinct and those endangered and on verge of extinction?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI BABULAL MARANDI): (a) Details of important wildlife seizures made between 1996 and 2000 by Regional Wildlife Preservation Offices of Government of India and others are given in Annexure [See Appendix 190, Annexure No. 20]

(b) The way the wildlife articles were processed, packed and transported indicate involvement of organized mafias in wildlife trade. No conclusive evidence of collusion of forest officials is available.

(c) The important cases regarding seizures of Panther, Tiger and Other skins detected in Uttar Pradesh have been handed over to CBI. The measures adopted by Government of India to conserve and protect wildlife are given in Annexure [See Appendix 190, Annexure No. 20]. The list of wild animals that are supposed to be extinct or on the verge of extinction is given in Annexure [See Appendix 190, Annexure No. 20].

Telecast of environment films

*†1419. SHRIMATI KUM KUM RAI: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have formulated any scheme for telecasting films based on the environment and jungle;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) if not, the reason therefor; and

(d) the steps being taken by Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI BABULAL

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.